

Water Tests satisfactory

All 380 water samples taken as part of the Kilmaley-Inagh Quality Assurance system in 2009 met the microbiological standards for crucial parameters such as E.coli (faecal coliforms).

While there were periodic difficulties with colour, the ongoing sampling regime carried out in homes along the network provides confirmation that members can have confidence in the safety of the water supply.

As regular testing is performed by the scheme, any incidents of bacterial contamination can be quickly identified and resolved.

Testing

In addition to the scheme's own QA sampling, Clare County Council and the HSE perform regular testing and can verify the results we have obtained.

We would ask members with undersink units or kitchen taps that receive water from a header tank in the attic, or indeed members who have a well supply plumbed into their mains network to inform testers of this when they arrive to take a sample. Testing of the Kilmaley-Inagh GWS supply should not be carried where any of the above circumstances arise.



A treated water sample being taken for analysis on Kilmaley-Inagh GWS. The scheme carried out 380 tests on the supply in 2009.

Cryptosporidium

A Cryptosporidium risk assessment was carried out on our source and it was found that Lough Naminna is at low risk of contamination by this dangerous pathogen. Tests taken in 2009 confirm that there are no Cryptosporidium present.

Members often ask why sometimes is their water cloudy grey but after sitting for a minute it is clear? The reason for this is simply that air has gotten into the distribution supply, either through a burst pipe, scouring of the mains, or a faulty air valve. There are no health risks!

Play your part

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place in Inagh Community Centre on March 24th at 8pm.

All members are welcome to attend and are encouraged to do so. New committee members are always welcomed and we would encourage members to put their names forward and get involved.

The committee usually holds a 2-hour meeting every 6 weeks, so it is not a lot of time to ask over a year!

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Similar problems to those that arose in the operation of our treatment plant occurred in treatment plants serving the other three other schemes in the Clare DBO bundle.

Far from bearing any responsibility, none of the four schemes had any input into raw water sampling in advance of the treatment process design, nor into the type of treatment system designed and built by the operators.

Committee proposes name change and adoption of new model rules

The committee will take the opportunity provided by a Special General Meeting following this year's AGM to propose that the co-operative change its name to Kilmaley-Inagh Group Water Scheme Co-operative Limited and will further propose the adoption of the new model rules for co-operative group water schemes.

Explaining the reasons behind both proposals, scheme Chairperson, James B. Lynch said:

Arguing that the lack of GWS involvement from the outset had proved to be 'a costly mistake', Kilmaley-Inagh GWS manager, Noel Carmody, explains:

'The DBO process required that we put our faith in consultants appointed by others and in EPS, the firm that won the public tender process.

'Completed plants were handed over to us and we were left to manage a 20-year Operation and Maintenance contract with EPS.

'We are known to everyone as Kilmaley Inagh GWS and the current legal name — Feighroe Agricultural Co-operative Society Limited — simply confuses our members and our suppliers.

'As for the proposal to adopt the new model rules, these have been developed by the Irish Co-operative Organisation Society (ICOS) in consultation with the National Federation of Group Water Schemes.

'They deal with important issues for the smooth running of any

group scheme and include operating regulations that are designed to protect the co-op.

'We have been advised by the NFGWS to adapt these new rules and are proposing that this be done. A copy of the new rules in booklet form is enclosed with this newsletter.

We are calling an SGM to consider both resolutions. This will be held immediately follow our AGM. The committee will be asking for your support for both proposals.

Determined

'As a result of what has happened since then, we are determined not to be sidelined again. Nor will we be taken for granted. 'We expect that the upgraded treatment facility to be constructed under the supervision of Clare Council Council will deliver top class drinking water on a consistent basis. This is what we are paying for and the committee and members of this scheme deserve no less.'

Website

Please visit our website www.kilmaleyinaghgws.ie We put alerts on it for planned outages, scouring, disruptions and important information on what is going on in the scheme.

You can use it to keep in touch with your water supply.

Your water bill: how much you pay is in your hands

With water charges a virtual certainty for everyone going forward, water conservation is an absolute must for all scheme members. Remember wasted water costs the same as used water to produce, which effects us all.

At present we receive a subsidy for water production for domestic houses. This allows us to give all domestic houses a free water allowance of 180,000 litres or 180m³, a high allowance by GWS standards.

As a result, households on this scheme don't receive a bill for water consumption unless they exceed the allowance. How much you pay is in your hands.

Even without the reintroduction of water charges on urban supplies (as announced in the last budget) the scale of your free allowance is bound to come under pressure, given that with the upgrade to our treatment plant we will have increased production costs.

Water cost

Water consumed over the free allowance is currently charged at €0.80 per 1,000 litres. This cost is also likely to rise in the future. By comparison, Clare County Council currently charges €1.35 per 1,000 litres. In other European countries, such as Germany, the cost is €7 per 1,000 litres!

When water charges are reintroduced on public water supplies, there is a possibility that the subsidy we receive will be substantially reduced. This will inevitably add to the pressure on the free allocation and on our water charge.

Now is the time to start conserving water, so that you will be better able to deal with these changes if and when they come.

Leakage

At a minimum, eliminate leakage from your premises by regularly reading your meter. Checking your meter costs you nothing, whereas not checking it could cost you a lot.

If the red dial on the right of the

meter digits is moving, water is going through your meter. If this is the case and you are sure there are no water appliances turned on, check your water pipes and fittings. If you find a leak, repair it immediately.

For farmers water troughs and pipe joints should all be checked for damage regularly, especially after every heavy frost.

Shut-off valves

Best practice would be to install a shut-off valve on pipes leaving the farm yard to shut off water supply to areas of land when not used by animals.

If you do not check for leaks and a leak goes undetected for a long time, you will be liable for a substantial water bill.

You wouldn't leave a light on continually as you know your ESB bill will be rise, The same mentality will have to be adopted when it comes to water.

The big Freeze – consumption up by 70%

During the prolonged freeze of recent months, Kilmaley Inagh GWS has seen daily water demand rise from 1,600 m³ to a peak of 2,736 m³. The difference of 1,137 m³ represents a 70% increase in daily water demand across the scheme.

Most of our reservoirs would not fill as water was leaving as fast as it was entering.

This increased demand will result in a massive increase in our water production costs (from the DBO operator) and these will have to be passed on to our members.

Metered

The majority of our connections are metered, so those who left taps running to prevent pipes freezing will receive a bill should their free allowance be exceeded.

We had little or no leakage on our mains, so the increase was almost entirely due to consumer demand.

While pipes froze for some, the fact that others left taps run-

ning meant that areas of the scheme had no water supply at all, as there simply was not enough to reach them.

As our mains system is mainly gravity fed, rising demand in one area means less water available for those further along the network and for those living in more elevated areas.

Water rationing had to be implemented to try to restore reservoir levels. We found many leaks on members' own connections. This was done by GWS staff reading individual meters. On a scheme as large as ours, this takes weeks, whereas, if everyone checked their own meters then the problem could have been resolved in days!

Those whose service pipes froze should strongly consider laying new ones at deeper levels (and insulated) to eliminate the possibility of their freezing again.

As we are still using 300,000 litres above normal daily demand, all members are asked to check their meters. It is in your own interest as well as in ours!



Leak detection and repair is an ongoing process for the staff of Kilmaley-Inagh GWS. However, most leaks are on consumers' premises and not on the mains.

Water treatment falls victim to frozen roads

Road conditions were so bad over Christmas and the New Year that on many occasions GWS staff simply couldn't travel out to inspect reservoirs and pump houses for health and safety reasons.

Moreover, the water treatment plant that could not be reached either by ourselves, the operators or our suppliers.

The drivers of the articulated lorries that remove sludge produced at the treatment plant refused to travel the roads, so that the sludge processing units froze and were inoperable. These two items combined meant that the treatment operators had to stop the normal filtration process and water could only be disinfected.

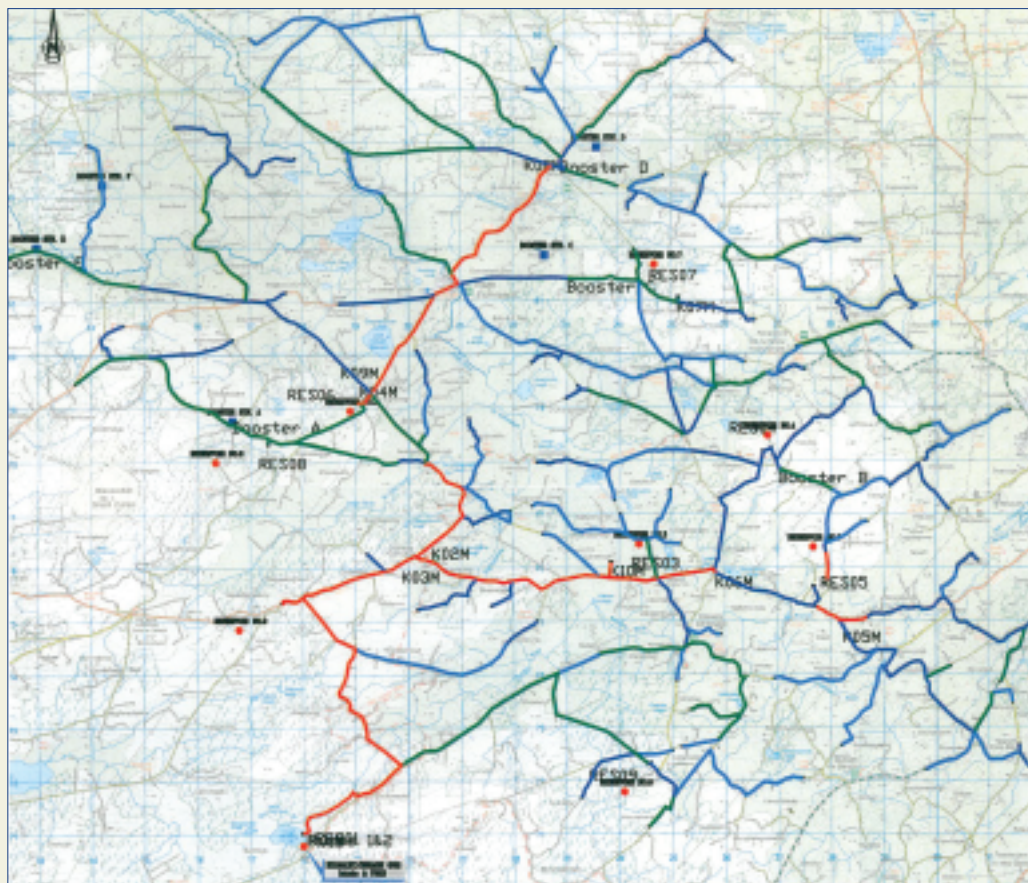
We need your contact details

We would like to set up a system where we can give important messages to you our members such as planned water outages etc. via text message to your mobile phone.

For this to work we would need one mobile contact detail per household. Please text your name number and townland to 085-7039348 or email noel.carmody@kilmaleyinaghgws.ie with your details.

Remember, this system can't work unless you forward your contact details so please do so.

Last year the number of people who sent on their details was so small that we couldn't set up the system. We are hoping for a better response this year.



Kilmaley-Inagh GWS network extends over ? miles and includes all or part of eight parishes.

Current GWS committee members

Officers

- Chairman**, James B. Lynch, *Boulyneaska, Kilmaley*;
Vice Chair, Richard Devereux, *Ballyvraneen, Ennistymon*;
Secretary, Noel Carmody, *Feighroe, Connolly*;
Treasurer, Tom Burke, *Moyhill, Ennistymon*.

Members

- Joseph Costello, *Kilmorane Ennis*
 Thomas Costelloe, *Edenvale Ennis*
 John Hehir, *Feighroe, Connolly*
 Raymond Foudy, *Been, Inagh*
 John Hegarty, *Moughna, Miltown Malbay*
 Pat Crowe, *Ilanbaun, Inagh*
 Adrian McMahon, *Drimeen, Ennis*
 Thomas Keane, *Drimeen, Ennis*

- Michael Halpin, *Bushypark*
 Vincent Barry, *Clongowna, Kilnamona*
 J. J. Rynne, *Carrowkeel, Inagh*
 David Sheedy, *Kilmorane, Ennis*
 Pat Gallagher, *Moughna, Miltown Malbay*
 Johnny Crawford, *Cloonanaha, Inagh*
 Andrew Sully, *Monreel South, Ennistymon*
 John McInerney, *Gortagannive, Kilmaley*

GWS Staff

Noel Carmody, Feighroe, Connolly (Manager)

Patrick Lynch, Lisroe, Kilmaley (Caretaker)

Brian Barry, Ballyyea, Inagh (Caretaker)

Upgrade Works completed in 2009

With little or no capital available for upgrade works in 2009, we were unable to proceed with many of the planned upgrading works.

However, funding was secured for the installation of new water mains in the Riverside estate in Inagh and the Fiachrua estate in Connolly. The result was a saving on water usage of 100m³ (100,000 litres) per day!

These works were carried out with 85% funding received in the form of a Capital Grant from the DoEHLG and were carried out under the public procurement least cost tender process.

We also installed a secondary

chlorination station at Been reservoir in Inagh to improve the chlorination process on the network. If this station proves a success, we hope to install other secondary chlorination stations. Repairs were carried out on the ball valve in Been reservoir, ensuring the reservoir can retain its required water level.

Proposed works for 2010

We were requested to submit a new programme of works for 2010 to Clare County Council. When completed, these works will improve your water supply: They include

- Pumphouse refurbishment
- Reservoir refurbishment
- Deployment of secondary

chlorination stations.

- Replacement of critical mains at Fermoy, Cragliegh, Kilnamona, Ballymacooda, Maurice

Mills, Clonboula and Furroor.

- Installation of 25 additional telemetry bulk meters for water conservation.



The secondary chlorination station installed at Been reservoir.



Kilmaley-Inagh GWS Report

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Message from the Chairman

As we approach our AGM on the 24th of March we look back on 2009 as a tough year as we were forced to make the case for a major overhaul of our treatment plant. News that we are to receive the necessary funding is welcome indeed.

We are committed to delivering the best water quality possible to you our members and because of this we have fought hard battle to ensure that this upgrade will take place despite the difficult economic circumstances and scarcity of public money.

This time around the scheme has a greater hand to play in the process and will insist that the final product will deliver a treatment plant that will provide top class drinking water long into the future. We have been given a second chance to get this right and there can be no mistakes.

The cold snap caused many difficulties and I would like to thank the GWS management and staff for all their work during and following this testing period.

This news letter is intended to highlight some of the issues that should be of interest to you.

This year we will hold an SGM following our AGM to consider two motions; one to change our legal name and the second to adopt the new model rules for group water schemes.

On the committee's behalf, I thank all those members who have paid their water charges and remind those who have yet to pay to forward their payment as soon as possible.

James B. Lynch
Chairman
Kilmaley-Inagh GWS

Funding Approved For Treatment Plant Upgrade

Following a protracted period of negotiations, there was good news for the committee and members of Kilmaley-Inagh GWS in December last, with the announcement that the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government (DoEHLG) has agreed to a €640,000 upgrade to our water treatment plant at Lough Naminna.

The announcement followed an extensive period of raw monitoring on the lake, carried out by GWS Manager, Noel Carmody, and Environmental Officers of Clare County Council.

The monitoring was designed to answer a simple question: was the deterioration in the lake's raw water colour that occurred during the winter of 2008 a 'once off' phenomenon or was it, in fact, something that was the 'norm' and likely to re-occur.

This was a very important issue, as it would decide whether or not the treatment plant designed as part of the DBO upgrade was, in fact, 'fit for purpose'.

Following compilation of all the data, it was concluded that *Lough Namina has not deteriorated in quality but is subject to seasonal variation in colour as might be expected in any up-land lake in a peaty catchment.*

Data

Clearly, the data gathered at the time the current plant was being designed was not sufficient to establish that a seasonal variation in raw water was likely to occur on our lake source.

As a result, the treatment facility built for our scheme proved incapable of removing the high colour levels experienced in the lake source from time to time.

The upgrade will provide a plant that can cope with colour

levels that are more than twice the existing design parameters!

Upgrade

The upgraded plant will include a Dissolved Air Floatation (DAF) system. This will remove most colour from the raw water before it reaches what are known as Culligan filters. These were designed to remove far lower colour levels, as well as purifying the water.

The addition of the DAF unit will mean that the filters will only be involved in water purification and high colour in the lake will not effect their performance.

As part of the upgrade a sludge plate press will be installed to cater for the sludge produced by the treatment process. This will mean a substantial cost-saving in sludge tankering and means that the costs of water production in the upgraded facility will rise by only 7 cents per cubic metre.

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Committee members Tom Burke, Jimmy Meehan and James B. Lynch at the treatment plant following its completion in 2006. Kilmaley-Inagh GWS committee is determined that shortcomings in the plant's operation since then will be fully resolved by the completion of an additional treatment process this year at a cost of €640,000.